



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Press Release

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California and Department of Defense Agree to Perchlorate Sampling Prioritization Protocol

Sacramento, CA – The California Environmental Protection Agency (CAL-EPA) and the Department of Defense (DoD) have finalized a procedure for prioritizing perchlorate sampling efforts at DoD facilities statewide. The document provides guidance to state of California agency officials and their DoD counterparts on the steps each party will take to identify and prioritize areas on military sites where perchlorate has likely been released in close proximity to drinking water sources. This DoD/CA-developed agreement is the first of its kind in the country.

The new protocol will address active and closed installations, non-operational ranges, and Formerly Used Defense Sites where funding has not already been allocated to address perchlorate. Any known perchlorate releases at a DoD site within one mile of a drinking water source where perchlorate has been detected will warrant the highest priority for sampling. It allows DoD to focus resources on the sites posing the most immediate threats to California's drinking water supplies. The new protocol will not affect any ongoing environmental restoration activities that the Department of Defense is already conducting to address perchlorate.

CA Perchlorate Prioritization Protocol -2-2-2-2

The Protocol is the result of a 9-month interagency effort by the California Perchlorate Working Group (CA PWG). The CA PWG was established in 2003 and consists of representatives from the CAL-EPA the

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Boards), and the Department of Defense including the Air Force, Navy, Army, Marine Corps, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "This protocol is a crucial step forward to address perchlorate concerns in California and will serve as a model for interagency partnering with other states," said Alex Beehler, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health.

The Protocol is only the first step. "Our cooperative implementation of the protocol will provide us the much needed information to better understand the scope and magnitude of the impact to our drinking water sources," said CAL-EPA head Terry Tamminen. The protocol will allow the State to assist DoD in prioritizing the investigation of suspected sites and will focus resources on the sites that may have the greatest impact to the public. If perchlorate releases are discovered, DoD intends to fully characterize and respond to the problems under its existing environmental response programs.

Currently, no drinking water standard for perchlorate has been adopted, although California recently adopted a public health goal of 6 ppb and the California Department of Health Services has begun its efforts to adopt a California Maximum Contaminant Limit. EPA and the California Department of Health Services are monitoring its occurrence in public water systems by requiring sampling under unregulated contaminant monitoring

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requirements, whereby public water supply systems test for specified chemicals that do not yet have drinking water standards established. "The Department of Defense remains committed to working with the State of California to set priorities, to identify and address perchlorate problems at military facilities, and to marshal resources for researching effective treatment technologies," said Alex Beehler.

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